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A
LETTER

WRIT TO AN

Atheistical Acquaintance

UPON

His turning Papist

IN HIS

OLD AGE.

By a Person of HONOUR.

LONDON:



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A Letter, &c.

TWAS the saying of a great Prelate,
That a Man of no Religion, might easily
be of any; and tho' I remember your
 ill Living, and this Bishop's true say-
 ing, yet I could not but be surprized at the News
 of your turning Papist, especially considering you
 had attain'd, not only to the full Years of Discre-
 tion, but the Old Age of Experience, which still
 is, or ever ought to be, the Parent of Wisdom and
 Consideration, both great Enemies to Popery.

But upon more serious Thoughts, I find Old
 Age to be the fittest Season of a Man's whole Life
 to turn Papist in, because 'tis nearest to that of
 Dotage; and since you are upon losing your Sen-
 ses, (as I conclude you are by turning Papist) I
 can assure you, you could not have pick'd out a Re-
 ligion so fit for one that has lost his Senses, as that
 of the Roman Church, because you must necessa-
 rily be out of them, before you can be admitted
 into it, since none can be a thorow pac'd Papist,
 who does not believe the Doctrin of Transubstanti-
 ation, and none can believe that Doctrin, who
 does believe his own Senses, since if you credit
 them, you cannot believe it ; a strange Article of
 Religion where to urge the Testimony of Sense is
 an Offence, and to produce the Arguments of Rea-

son, is no less than High Treason against the Royal Dignity of this Majestick Popish Miracle, call'd Transubstantiation.

But since I remember you never before own'd your self to be of any Religion, (still living as if you had none ;) I cannot say you have now chang'd your Religion, but chosen it, and indeed considering how many Years of Deliberation you took before you did it ; in my Opinion after all, you have cull'd out the very poorest of all the Flock ; for *Amsterdam* could not have given you a worse, I mean as to the true Direction of your Soul to Heaven ; nor yet a better to convey it thither, if you will believe your Priest's false Promises of Salvation ; for if you have much Mony, no matter how little Religion ; since you may with it purchase a whole Bundle of Absolutions and Indulgencies sufficient to keep your Soul out of Purgatory, which is the Parent of Indulgencies invented by the Roman Church, meerly to frighten and cozen the Rich out of their Estates.

And tho' our blessed Saviour bid the young Man in the Gospel, who had great Possessions, *To sell all and give to the Poor and follow him, (for 'tis as hard for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, as 'tis for a Camel to pass through the Eye of a Needle,)* yet the Popish Clergy will not allow the Rich to sell any thing, but they must convey all they have to the Patrimony of the Church, and then they shall be sure to purchase Heaven for their Mony ; for, as the Roman Church can by their Miraculous Art, Transubstantiate a small Piece of Wafer into the full bulk of a Man's Body ; so they can with the same Ease, and by the same Art, Transubstantiate and stretch the small Eye

Eye of a Needle, to the large Size of a Door, wide enough to let you into Paradise without stooping, though you were as big as a Camel ; for they will tell you, *St. Peter* left with them the Keys of Heaven, and they have Power to keep out and let in whom they please ; so that if you can but pay your Priest Mony enough on Earth, he will never fail to promise you a good purchase in Heaven ; for he is so good a Christian, that he will give you Heavenly Treasure for your Earthly, by Bill of Exchange on the Virgin *Mary*, upon the Credit of so many Masses he will make to her, for your Soul on Earth ; but be not deceived by them, as you must certainly be if you rely on them.

For this false pretended Heavenly Wealth he tells you he'll furnish you with, is but meer fairy Treasure, which only lasts till it be discover'd, and then vanisheth as soon as 'tis ; it being not more against the Course of Nature, that the Mony you pay for those Masses should ascend to Heaven, than 'tis against the Stream of Reason to believe, that they should carry your Soul there ; such common Sail-Masses for the Souls of the Dead, being but like fine bright Clouds in the Sky, which tho' they look high, and make a great shew, yet they have no real Substance, being but meer Airy Apparitions,

Therefore, tho' I was ever an Enemy to your Religion, yet I am still so much a Friend to your Person, as to wish, that as you have had always a great share of natural Wit, so you may now have so much Heavenly Wisdom, as to pray to God to open your Eyes before Death quite closes them, that you may through his Grace clearly
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see the foppish Religion you have now chosen, and the ungodly Life you have still led, and that you may seriously reflect and truly repent of both, and often remember that Death will soon seize you, and Judgment will soon follow it; therefore pray to God for your own Soul, whilst you are in this World, and trust not to the Mony you leave with your Priest to pray for it after you are gone to the next, for then such Masses can only cheat you of your Mony, but can never rid you of your Sins.

And did I not certainly know that you had much rather (in Point of Religion) read a dull Lay-man's Letter, than a Learned Divines Book; not that you can be ignorant, but that such a good Book must be much better for your use, than such a short Letter; but because this Letter, is so much shorter than such a good Book, and consequently less troublesome to read, for all Troubles you esteem Evils, and of Evils the least is best, or rather less ill; And therefore had I not known this sort of Logick to suit exactly with your lazy and unzealous Humour, I should have rather recommended to your reading, a Sermon writ by that Pious and Learned Divine Dr. *John Tillotson*, for many Writers do but in a manner fence with their Arguments against Popery, but this Dr. makes all his home thrusts, and wounds the Papist in the very Vitals of their Religion; and as a skilful Painter may draw exactly well a great Beauty in small Proportions, so this Learned Person has largely confuted Popery in one short Sermon.

And as none can be said to steal from the Bible, tho' he takes and quotes never so many Verses out of it. So none can be justly accused
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for having sto'n or plunder'd this Reverend Doctor of any of his Arguments against the common Enemy the Papists, because he design'd them freely for the benefit of all such, as will employ all or any of them, to that use, they being bestow'd by him, on that publick and charitable Design, as the Lands they call Commons, are left to certain Parishes, who are never to be fenced in for private use, but still left open for publick Benefit.

Nor did I ever hear of any Man that valued Money the less, because it pass'd thorow many hands before it came to his, nor a good Receipt the worse, because 'twas given him by another, and not found out by himself; and therefore, since you now find your self infected with a foul malignant Inclination to Popery, and since I can here give you a Sovereign Medicine against it; never trouble your self to examin who found it out, where the Drugs grew, or from whence they came, or from whom I had them, so they can cure you. And this I am sure I can truly say, That what I have taken out of Doctor *Tillotson's* Sermon, was not to shew my own good reading, but to set out your bad Religion, which is chiefly made up of Ceremony and Shew.

But the Papist bids the Protestant Hereticks hold their prating, for they have an Argument and a Question, that's able to knock them all in the Head, (sure they mean only such a have no Brains in them.) Their Argument is as very common, as 'tis highly irrational, which is this; The Protestant Church holds a Papist may be saved, the Roman Church denies that a Protestant can, therefore 'tis wiser and more safe to be

of that Church, to which Salvation is granted on both sides: But this is a weak sophistical kind of reasoning, and only fit to take such as have no Reason; for by this Argument the then Donatists that held the Baptism of the Catholicks was not good, and the Catholicks that held the Baptism of the Donatists was good shou'd make it reasonable to infer, that therefore St. *Austin*, and the other Catholicks ought according to this Rule, to have gon and been re baptized by the Donatists, because both sides acknowledged their Baptism to be good.

St. *Paul* also owned a Possibility of Salvation, tho' with great Difficulty to those, who built with Straw and Stubble on the Foundation of Christianity, that is, who built upon the Jewish Ceremonies, and Observances, but they denied a Possibility of Salvation to St. *Paul* and his Followers, saying, *Unless they were circumcised and kept the Law of Moses they could not be saved*; so that by this worthy Argument, St. *Paul* and his Followers, ought to have gon over to those Judaizing Christians, because it was acknowledged by both sides, that they might be saved; but St. *Paul* was too wise, to leave a certain way of Salvation, only for a meer Possibility of being saved.

Their Question is a Twin-Brother in Ignorance to this their Argument; for the Papists ask the Protestants, Where was their Church before *Luther*? who answer, Where their Church was never since the Council of *Trent*, in the Bible, where I am sure the Papist will find none of the Councils Twelve New Articles of Faith recorded; as being never taught by our Blessed Saviour, or ever so much as mentioned by any of his Apostles,

files, in any of their Epistles or Writings ; and yet forsooth, these are the Old Apostolical Doctrins, which (*none who does not believe*) can be saved ; yet I shall beg your Patience to give me leave to name and look a little into some of these new *Trent* Articles of Faith.

The first shall be on that Unchristian Doctrin, (as Doctor *Tillotson* justly styles it) called Transubstantiation ; and the reason the Reverend Doctor names it Unchristian is, because 'tis a Doctrin that undermines the very Foundation of Christianity, as will plainly appear (says he) if we but consider the grand Argument, the Apostles used to convince the World of the Truth of Christianity, and that was this, That our Blessed Saviour, the Author of this Doctrin, wrought such and such Miracles, and appeared to them, and conversed with them after his Death, which they confirm by an Infallible Testimony, (which the Papist will not allow as such, because they will believe no Infallibility out of their own Church ;) That they themselves were Eye-witnesses, both to his Miracles and Resurrection.

So that 'tis absolutely necessary to rely on the Testimony of the Senses ; for if the Apostles Eyes had failed them, then they were not sure they saw his Miracles, or himself after his Resurrection, and then the main Assurance of Christ's being risen falls to the Ground, and all the Christian Doctrin was buried with him in his Grave ; for if there be no assurance in the Testimony of the Senses, there's no Assurance of Christianity, because no assurance of Christ's being risen from the Dead ; so that the Business is brought to this fair Issue, If the Testimony of the Senses are to

be trusted, then Transubstantiation is false, and if they are not to be trusted, then no man can say that Christian Religion is true ; for the Apostles seeing Christ after his Resurrection, is the great proof we have that he is risen.

Farther granting the Scripture to be a Divine Revelation, and that these words, *This is my Body*, must be necessarily taken in a strict literal Sense, I ask the Papist, What greater Evidence has any Man, that these words are in the Bible, than every Man has that the Bread is not changed in the Sacrament ? Nay none has so much, for we have only the Evidence of one Sense, that these words are in the Bible, but that the Bread is not changed into the Body of Christ, we have the concurring Testimony of several of the Senses together.

How erroneous then must the Doctrin of the Church of *Rome* be in this point, that holds it to be a principal Article of the Christian Faith, and so preached by the Apostles, by which they throw a great Contradiction and Absurdity on their Doctrin, that they should give for the great proof of the Truth of Christianity, That the Senses are to be trusted, and at the same time give it for one of the Articles of the Christian Faith, that the Senses are not to be trusted, as the Apostles must do, if they did Preach the Doctrin of Transubstantiation, which is an utter denying that the Testimony of the Senses are to be relied on.

In a word, if it once be admitted, that the Senses of all Men may be deceived in the most plain and sensible Matters that can be, (for there can be no greater difference, than between a little bit of a Wafer, and the whole Body of a Man,) there's no way left to convey or prove a Divine Revelation.

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But the Papist in answer to this, ask's us, Whether God cannot impose upon the Senses of Men, and represent to them things otherwise than they are? Yes surely, if he has revealed that he wou'd, we are undoubtedly to believe him; but then we ought to be assured that he hath made such a Revelation, which assurance no Man can have, the certainty of Sense being taken away.

But to shew you that this Doctrin of Transubstantiation is far from being Apostolical; it was brought into the Roman Church by the Lateran Council, under Pope *Innocent* the Third, and with it that Reverend Doctrin of deposing Kings in case of Heresie, and absolving their Subjects from their Allegiance; These are two Twin-Doctrins that hunted in Couples; and for the last, tho' they are now asham'd to own it, yet the Popes were not formerly shy to practise it.

Next their worshipping of Images, which practice, notwithstanding all their subtle Distinctions and Evasions about it, is but the very same the Heathens us'd in the same Case, and is as point blank against the Second Commandment, as wilful Murther is against the Sixth, which the Popish Teachers are so sensible of, and so afraid the People should be so too, that therefore in their ordinary Catechisms, and Manuals of Devotion, they leave out the Second Commandment, and divide the Tenth into two to make up the Number; That the Infallible Church of *Rome* might not appear so fallible as to act so contrary to the Commands of God.

I shall pass by their taking away the Cup in the Sacrament from the Laity, tho' our Saviour ordered it to be given in both kinds; and they might

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as well take away the Bread, as the Cup, and both as either.

And for the Papists praying in an unknown Tongue ; do but read *St. Paul* on that Subject as to the great Errour of doing it, and he will satisfie you, tho' he cannot convince them.

Next let us reflect a little upon that part of the Romish Doctrin of praying to, and worshipping of the Virgin *Mary*, which hath been now for some Ages past, a principal Part of their Religion ; for they build Chappels, erect Altars, and sanctify Holy-days to her ; in short, she makes the greatest Part, both of their Publick Worship and private Devotions, they praying to her more than either to God, or our Saviour, the Papist using ten *Ave Maries* , for one *Pater Noster*.

Indeed one who considers this, and had never read the Bible, might well have concluded, that there had been more said of her in the New Testament, than of God, or Christ ; and that it had been full from one End to the other of Precepts and Exhortations, for the worshipping of her ; yet I defy any Papist to shew me (as to this Doctrin of praying to the Virgin *Mary*) where she's so much as once named by the Apostles in any of their Epistles ; or where there's one Verse in the whole Bible, that favours in the least of paying Worship to her, but rather the contrary, our Saviour seeming to take all Occasions to restrain us from it, as when they told him, *Your Mother and your Brethren are without, who, says he, are my Mother and my Brethren? he that doth the Will of my Father, the same is my Mother, my Sister, and my Brother.* And when the Woman broke out in a Rapture, concerning the blessed Mother of the Lord, blef-

bleſſed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps that gave thee ſuck, our Saviour diverts it to another thing, by ſaying, *Yea rather bleſſed are they that hear the word of God and keep it*; does our Saviour, or his Apoſtles in any of their particular Directions and Precepts concerning Prayer, and the Manner of it, and by whom we are to addreſs our ſelves to God, give the leaſt hint, or intimation of praying to the Virgin *Mary*, or making uſe of her Mediation for us? or is there one Verſe in the whole Bible, that orders us in the leaſt to pay her Worſhip?

In ſhort, did God ever command it? did ever our Saviour teach it? did ever the Apoſtles Preach it? or did ever the Primitive Chriſtians praſtiſe it? Nay, did any of the Writers of the firſt three hundred Years, ever name any ſuch thing as paying her Worſhip, or making her any part of their Religion? Indeed about the middle of the fourth Century it begun to creep in among ſome ſuperſtitious Perſons; and therefore *Epiphanius*, who lived about that time, call'd it the Hereſie of Women."

And ſince 'tis ſo much taught, and commonly praſtiſed in the Roman Church, without the leaſt Colour of a Command in God's Word for it; give me leave a little to reflect on the Infallibility that the Roman Church pretends to; becauſe I am ſure, this is a Doctrin that's able to bring into her as many Errours as ſhe thinks convenient to receive, (which is more than a few,) and yet this infallible Church cannot yet tell where this Infallibility is ſeated, whether in the Pope alone, or in a Council alone, or in both together, or in a diffuſive Body of Chriſtians,
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but they are sure they have it, tho' they know not where it is.

Indeed I can't imagin, how they, or any can think it reasonable, that this Infallibility was confirmed on the Church of *Rome*, and that all the primitive Christians did believe it, and had recourse to it, and yet that this very Roman Church should be still at a loss where 'tis, and that should make a difference, which should be the End of all Differences. That not one word should be intimated in all the Bible of this high and peculiar Priviledge above all other Churches, and that the Apostles in all their Epistles, should give no notice or caution to Christians, to appeal to the Bishop of *Rome* for determining any Difficulties, which even in those Times hapned among them, and that they should then never speak of it, tho' there were so many occasions for it. Nor that the Ancient Fathers in all their Disputes with the Hereticks, should never appeal to this Judge; nay, that they should not do it in all Cases of difference, it being such a sure and speedy way of ending them all among Christians. And so I have done with Doctor *Tillotson's* Arguments, and 'twere well for the Papist he had done with their Religion too; for his Reasonings and Arguments like skrew'd Guns, they carry farther, and pierce deeper than any others which are of the ordinary level among us.

And now by this Infallible Churches leave, tho' I pretend not in the least to be a Scholar, much less a Divine, yet I doubt not without being either, to prove the Roman Church, since her adding twelve New Articles of Faith to the Old Apostolical Creed, which were coyn'd in the Mint of *Trent*, and published

lished by Pope *Pius* the Fourth, to be very false, and erroneous in her Principles, tho' she does with so much Confidence, but no Truth, say, that she holds at this time the old, true, Catholick and Apostolical Faith, and yet declares her self to believe at the same time, the new *Trent* Creed to be the true Catholick Faith, without which no Man can be saved; which are the very words in that Creed.

But before I make any farther Progress on this Subject, I will recommend to you two Remarks well worth your Observation on this worthy Council; The first is its heedless contradicting and forswearing in the very first Article: The second is the want of Christian Charity, by damning all the Churches before *Trent* Council; Two foul Crimes very unbecoming a General Council, whose business is not to perform, but reform Sin. Now you must first know, that the Observance of the twelve *Trent* Articles of Faith, are bound upon all by Oath, and in the very first Article they declare to embrace the Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Tradition, and yet at the very same time swear to observe all that's decreed by that Council, which orders that the Holy Communion shall be administered to the Laity but in one kind, when for above a thousand Years after Christ, it was given to them in both, in all the Christian Churches over the whole World; and the Roman Church cannot deny, but that it was our Saviour's Command, as well as all the Churches practice, for so many years; Nay, in the fourth Article of the *Trent* Creed, they use these very words; That they receive and approve the Rites of the Catholick Church, in the solemn Administration of the Sacraments; and yet tho' the receiving it in both

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kinds,

kinds, is both Apostolical Tradition and Ecclesiastical Practice, yet they positively forbid it to the Laity : The Conclusion makes it self.

My second Observation is, how uncharitable this Council is, and all its Disciples in their condemning all other Churches ; for surely, these *Trent* Creed-makers have not so much Impudence, (tho' I know they have a great deal) as to pretend to follow our Blessed Saviour's charitable Doctrine, who commands us to pray for our Enemies ; but this worthy Council is so very far from praying for their Enemies, as they damn their very Friends, the old Roman Church, with all the Christian Churches dispersed over the Face of the whole Earth ; for she no more than the rest, did ever hear before the Council of *Trent*, that its twelve New Articles, was the old true Catholick and Apostolical Faith, without which no Man can be saved ; all I shall say to this is, that as Charity covers many Faults, so the want of it discovers many Vices, which is apparent in the Church of *Rome* more than all, because she shews less Charity than any.

My next business is to shew you, that from the days of the Apostles, to the Time of the *Trent* Council, among the many Creeds named by *Athanasius*, *Eusebius* and others ; none of them ever made the least attempt of altering, or much less of adding any one new Article of Faith, but only explain'd the Old, esteeming the Apostles Creed to be fully sufficient ; being as *Tertullian* elegantly styles it, *A Little Body of great Truths*, The Rule of Faith, instituted by Christ, and transmitted from him to his Apostles.

I could here for the Confirmation of this Truth, produce you the Testimonies of all the Eminent Fathers of all Ages of the Christian Church ; but that would not only tire your Patience, but swell this Letter above the moderate Bounds of one ; to prevent which, I shall only quote you some few of the many, which will be enough to justifie, that all acknowledged this great known Truth ; that there was never added any new Article of Faith, to the old Apostolical Creed before the *Trent* Council.

Therefore, I shall only here name you the first four General Councils, those of *Nice*, *Constantinople*, *Ephesus*, and *Chalcedon*. And as to the first of these Councils, when the *Nicene* Fathers met to settle the Controversie about the Son of God, they were so far from making any new Creed, or adding any New Article to the Old, that they expounded only the meaning of one of the Articles, the Sense of which the *Arians* had perverted, and had therefore little Design of changing or adding to the Christian Faith, contain'd in the Apostles Creed, when at their meeting they read no other Creed but it.

And St. *Austin*, before he began his Explication on the first Book of *Genesis*, sets down what the Catholick Faith is, which he says is nothing else, but what is contain'd in the *Nicene* Creed.

But what need I alledge more than the words of the great *Athanasius*, on this Subject, in the Letter which he and some other Bishops with him writ to the Emperour *Jovian* ; where they tell him, that the Faith professed by the *Nicene* Fathers, was the very same which was Preach'd from the beginning, and unto which all the

Churches every where consented to, whether in *Greece, Africk, Spain, France, Italy, &c.* with all the Churches of the East, (a few *Arians* excepted;) and then setting down the *Nicene* Creed, they conclude, in this Faith 'tis necessary for all to remain, as being Divine and Apostolical, and therefore not to be changed; which is a most plain Declaration, (by the Council of *Trent's* leave) that the Faith contained in this Creed, is not at all defective and short, as the *Trentonians* did believe it was, by their adding more to it.

And *Irenæus* says, that the true Church throughout all the World, hath but one and the same Faith, she had from the beginning, which I'm sure plainly concludes, that the now Roman Church cannot be the true Church, because it holds not the same Faith now, she did in the beginning, having enlarg'd her Creed by twelve new Articles of Faith, coyn'd in the Council of *Trent*, and never heard of in any Christian Church in the whole World, before that late worthy Council.

For the second general Council of *Constantinople*, I shall not need name here, since it contain'd the same of the first general Council of *Nice*.

And for the third general Council assembl'd at *Ephesus*; all the Fathers of it were so fast united together in this Perswasion, that the Apostles Creed contain'd all things necessary to be believ'd, as that Council decreed, that it should not be lawful for any to write, compose, offer, or produce any other Article of Faith, than those defined by the *Nicene* Council; and if any were so bold as to dare the doing of it, if they were-
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Lay-men, they should be Anathematiz'd, and if they were Clergymen or Bishops, they should be deposed ; which plainly informs us, what would become of the present Pope and his Clergy, if he and they had attempted then, what they profess to do now, which is to add no less than twelve new Articles of Faith, as if the old Apostolical Creed was not sufficient and compleat enough to make up the new Romish Church Faith, without the new *Trent* Addition.

And for the fourth general Council of *Chalcedon*, it renewed this Canon of the Council of *Ephesus*, decreeing in a manner the very same words, only with this difference, to Lay-men is added Monks, against whom the Synod decreed an *Anathema*, if they pretended to teach any other Faith.

I could also here name the fifth general Council held at *Constantinople*, under the Emperour *Justinian* ; which Council professed in their third Session, that they embraced the same Faith with the four foregoing Councils of *Nice*, *Constantinople*, *Ephesus*, and *Chalcedon*, and so did all the other general Councils sing the same Note, that no new Article of Faith should be added to the old Apostolical Creed. Yet the late pretended general Council of *Trent*, added no less than twelve new Articles ; which was but a declaring that they esteem'd the Apostles Creed defective and light by twelve Grains, or else surely they would never have added that Number to make it weight, as they thought and pretended to do ; by which that Council does in effect declare themselves to be more knowing in what is necessary to true Faith, than the first four
general

General Councils, and the very Holy inspir'd Apostles themselves: And this that Council says, (but with great impudence and falseness) is the true old Catholick and Apostolick Faith, without which no Man can be saved, for 'tis the very words of *Pius* the Fourth's Creed.

This is indeed a princely Doctrin, fit for such a princely Pope, of whom I must beg leave, (or else I shall be so bold as to take it) to let slip a Lease of Popes, and four General Councils against his twelve new Articles of Faith.

The First Pope shall be *Pius* the Second, against *Pius* the Fourth; for this *Pius* the Second confesseth, that before the Time of the *Nicene* Council, little regard was had of the Roman Church, which is a plain Contradiction to Pope *Pius* the Fourth, and all Popes, since that she is the Mother of all the Churches; for sure all the Churches did know the Duty they owed their Mother, so well, as not to have neglected the paying it, if they had believ'd it truly due to her; but it appears by their not paying, they esteem'd it not truly due.

My Second Pope is *Gregory* the Great, whose Character is, That he was the worst Bishop that ever went before him, and the best that ever came after him; sure it cannot be upon the Account of upholding, or enlarging the Power of the Court of *Rome*; for I am very confident, and I believe my Confidence is grounded upon this good Reason, that had Pope *Gregory* liv'd in the Time of Pope *Pius* the Fourth, and had been assur'd that he had taken upon him to add twelve new Articles to the old Apostolical Creed, he would have said the very same of him, as he did

did of *John* the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, when he was told he had taken upon him, the Title of Universal Patriarch or Bishop; That whosoever should usurp to himself that Title, was a forerunner of Anti Christ: And for his part he pretended to no other Title, than that of being a Servant to the Servants of God, tho' he was not only then Bishop of, but Resident in *Rome*.

But Pope *Boniface*, who soon after succeeded him in the Papacy, tho' he had a less humble Christian Mind, yet he had a much higher Papal Spirit; for he presently chang'd that Note, and swallowd greedily that sweet tempting Bit of Universal Bishop, choosing rather the great Power of being the Head, and Master of all the Bishops on Earth, than the humble Character of being Servant to the Servants of the great God of Heaven. By which he shewed the Pride of a bad Pope, but not at all the Humility of a good Christian, by esteeming the Office of a Pope more perfect freedom, than that of God's Service.

But this Title of Universal Bishop is attended with such great Dignity, and accompanied with such a large Revenue, that all Pope *Boniface's* Successors, would never since abandon that proud Usurpation; for tho' the doing it may be a Sin, yet that's nothing to the Pope; for he that has Power to forgive other Mens Sins, may easily absolve himself of his own; and indeed I believe, he has as full Power to pardon his own Sins, as much as any others.

But now to return to the Point I was about; this Pope *Gregory* concurr'd in his Opinion with the first four General Councils, that no new Articles of Faith were to be admitted, but what were pro-

professed by them : And in his giving an account of his Faith, as the Custom was for every Pope upon the Advancement to his Papal Dignity ; he speaks of the first four General Councils in so high a Stile, as he professed to receive and reverence them, as the four Books of the Holy Gospel : How vastly differing was the Faith of this Pope *Gregory*, from that of Pope *Pius* the Fourth, and the now Roman Church, who, tho' we Protestants embrace all the Doctrins of our Saviour contain'd in the Apostles Creed, and confirmed by the first four General Councils, yet the Church of *Rome* will not allow, that the Performance of these, with a strict vertuous Life, can afford us so much as a Possibility of Salvation ; To which unchristian and uncharitable Doctrin of theirs, I shall only answer, That the Papists by this plainly shew, that they forget that Charity is an essential Mark of true Christianity ; and what the Apostle saith of particular Christians, is as true of whole Churches, That tho' they have all Faith, yet if they have no Charity, they are nothing.

The third Pope I shall here produce is, *Pelagius*, who being elected to the Papacy, was demanded, if he held the Definitions of the Council of *Chalcedon*, (which contain'd that of *Nice*, *Constantinople* and the *Ephesine* Creed) To which he made answer in a Letter, which is in the Body of the Canon Law, that he received the Definitions of the first four General Councils, concerning the Catholick Faith, and then beginning to rehearse his Creed, as the fashion was upon being made Pope ; he repeated the Apostles Creed, *This is my Faith* (said he) *and the Hope that is in me, by the Gift of God's Mercy, of what St. Peter commands*

mands us to be ready to answer every one, who asketh us a Reason, and an Account of it. Of which I am sure the *Trentonian* Fathers, with their twelve new additional Articles, can give no good Account out of Scripture, because there's not a word mention'd of them in it.

Therefore I shall conclude with St. *Austin*, Since the Just live by Faith, the greater care must be taken, that Faith be not corrupted, and then adds, Now the Catholick Faith is made known to the faithful in the Apostles Creed; which plainly argues, that since the *Trent* Articles are in no part of the Apostles Creed, or in God's Word, they can be no part of the Catholick Faith.

And now to conclude this Point, I shall leave it to the Popes for a *Memorandum*, the Example of their Brother Pope *Honorius*, who was condemned by two Councils as an Heretick, and also anathematized by Pope *Leo* the Second; And pray, why was this great Scandal and heavy Punishment laid upon his Holiness? the reason Pope *Leo* tells us, was, because he consented to violate the Rule of Apostolical Tradition, meaning as it was contain'd in the Apostles Creed. And surely if declaring a Defect in this Creed be a Violation of it; then certainly nothing can be more plain, than that Pope *Pius* the Fourth, and the Council of *Trent*, have defiled the Apostolical Creed, for they have declared it to be too short and defective, by their adding twelve new Articles of Faith to it, since 'tis gross folly to add to a thing, what one believes does not want any Addition.

And now I have given you a Lease of Popes, against one Pope, and four General Councils, a-
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gainst one only pretended one, for I can esteem that of *Trent* no other, being made up of a Pack of Italian Bishops, and so in effect was no more general, than the single Roman Church is Catholick, and Universal. And tho' the Papists know, there was a Catholick Church before a Roman; yet they will now include the Catholick in the Roman, and upon that account call themselves Roman Catholics, a singular Universal Church; But Popish Bulls are so very common in *Rome*, as they are to be the less wondred at for it.

And so, I hope, I have sufficiently prov'd, that this Question of the Papist to the Protestants is very impertinent, Where was your Religion before *Luther*? To which Question we can truly answer, (as we did before,) Where I am sure the Popish Creed never was since the Council of *Trent*, in the Bible. And therefore since the Papists will attempt casting Novelty on the Protestant Religion, they ought not to wonder I here speak Truth of theirs: For this their Question to us, will but prove to them, like a Gun very much overcharg'd, which instead of hitting the Mark 'tis shot at, flies about the Ears of him that shoots it. For I can safely say, because truly, that the present Roman Church with her Train of *Trent* Additions, cannot be the same true Old Catholick, and Apostolical Church, that she was before the Time of that Council, because she has taken a New Creed, and a New Creed must make a New Church, as well as a New Faith must make a New Religion, and therefore she cannot be altogether the Old Catholick and Apostolical Church, she now so confidently pretends
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to, and vainly boasts of, as being the Mistress and Mother of all Churches, when in truth she's far from being so to any one of them; except that of *Trent*, of which we yield her to be the true Mother, as will here appear upon a short Examination into this Matter.

First, the Roman Church cannot justly call her present Faith to be altogether Old, because a great part of it is altogether New, as only taking its Date from the Birth of the Council of *Trent*; and all know 'tis not much more than a hundred Years since that Council was hatch'd; so that the *Trent* Creed, making now a main part of the Romish Faith, (which is a Truth the Papists dare not deny, without denying a main part of their present Faith;) how is it possible she can pretend her Faith is altogether Old; when she must yield at the same Time, that no less than twelve Articles of the now Roman Church Faith is in (a manner) altogether New? and how well new Cloth agrees with an Old Garment, the Scripture tells us.

Nor has the Roman Church any better reason for stiling her self altogether Catholick, because a main part of the Faith of her Church, is not universally believ'd, no not by half the Christian Churches, (I wonder for my part 'tis by any;) so that until the Papists can make the lesser part to contain the greater, they must not expect to make the Protestants believe the single Roman Church, can contain the Catholick, that is, the universal Church.

And for the Roman Church stiling her self altogether Apostolical; I cannot at all find she has the least Colour of Reason for it, since the Date of the *Trent* Creed, which is the present Romish Faith;) for 'tis most certain that Creed was never so much as heard of, much less taught by any of the Apostles, in any of their Epistles or Writings, or ever nam'd in any Christian Church over the whole World, for more than fifteen hundred Years after Christ; so that an Infant may as well pretend to be as old as *Methusalem*, as the New *Trent* Creed can, to be the old Apostolical Faith. Therefore to sum up all in a word, Since the *Trent* Creed makes a main part of the Romish Faith, all the Reasons the Papists can give (in my opinion) for their Faith being altogether Apostolical, and their Church the Mother of all Churches, is but that poor weak Womanish kind of reasoning, She is so, because she is so.

But for the Protestant Religion, I can here easily and truly prove it to be altogether Old, altogether Catholick, and altogether Apostolical. The Protestant Religion is truly altogether Old, because we believe the old Apostolical Creed, which contains the Doctrins of our Blessed Saviour, given by him to his Apostles, and confirmed by the first four General Councils, which Creed we continue steadfast to, without the least taking from it, or adding to it, which the Papists with their additional New *Trent* Creed, cannot justly, nay so much as pretend to.

So that 'tis most certain, that unless the Papists will deny the Apostolical Religion to be the Old Religion; they cannot truly say, the Protestants

stants is the New. And let the Papists but seriously reflect on the *Trent* Creed they believe now, and on that of the first four General Councils, which was the Faith, the Romish Church held then, and I am sure, they may as reasonably attempt to prove a Son may be elder than his natural Father, as to pretend to justify that the *Trent* Creed (of not much more than a hundred Years standing) to be elder than the Apostles Creed, which was made above fifteen hundred Years before it.

And therefore surely the Roman Church cannot, or least ought not to deny, that since the Protestant Faith is still contain'd intire in the Apostles Creed, it must be so many degrees elder than the Roman Faith, as the Roman Church hath built new Stories, on the old Protestant Foundation, since at the Time of the first four General Councils, (for then Protestant and Papist were all one Faith;) so that if the Roman Church will allow, (what they dare not deny) that their Religion was good at that Time, they cannot justly say the Protestants is bad at this Time, since we profess the very same Creed now, they did then, the Protestant Church having, (as I said before.) not in the least taken from, or added to the Apostolical Creed, as I am sure the Papists cannot deny but that they themselves have: And tho' the Court of *Rome*, has caus'd the Church of *Rome* to differ much from what she then was; yet praised be God, the Protestants have not alter'd from what they then were, and therefore we cannot be truly said, to differ more from the Church of *Rome*, at this Time, than she has differ'd from her self since that Time. I mean of the first four General Councils.

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Next I say, the Protestant Faith is altogether Catholick, because 'twas the Faith, that all the Christian Churches over the whole World professed, (a few *Arians* in the East only excepted) for above fifteen hundred Years together, as the Papists themselves can no more justly deny, than they can truly prove, that the new Roman Creed, with its *Trent* Addition, was the Faith of all the Christian Churches in the World, for so much as one day, no nor what's worse, is ever like to be to the last day.

And lastly, for the Protestant Church being now altogether Apostolical, the Papists may with the same reason and Justice deny the Apostles Creed to be Apostolic, as to deny our Faith is not so, since the Protestant Faith is contain'd in the Apostles Creed, which we never at all varied from, but continued altogether firm to, without the least Alteration or Diminution; a happy Truth, which I'm sure the Roman Church dares not now pretend to, without having no less than twelve new Articles of Faith to flie in her Face, and giving her as many Times the Lye for pretending to it.

And now there remains only to add, That if the Church of *Rome* has any Inclination to bring the Protestant Church into a hearty Unity, and firm Community with her; the best and only way will be to take the first four General Councils as the Judge and Standard to measure all our present Differences by, and if the Protestants have deviated in the least from them, to reform in what they have differed; and let the Papists but do the same, and retrench all their idle new supernumerary *Trent* Articles of Faith, and disband all their vain superstitious

stitious Ceremonies, neither of which was ever taught or indeed heard of by the Apostles, or primitive Christians, and reduce their Creed to the same it was in the Time of the first four General Councils, and then the Papist as well as Protestant will become of the same Apostolical Faith now, as we were both of us then, that is, be again both of one and the same Religion.

But the Pope's Power is too high, and his Revenue too great to admit this mortifying Spirit ; light Money can never agree with true Scales, nor Deformity like a true Glass ; no more can the new Additions of the Romish Creed endure the true Touch-Stone of the old Apostolical Faith : Therefore to conclude in a word ; unless you are resolv'd to choose superstitious Doctrine before Gospel Truths ; a false Religion before a true one ; Darkness before Light, the *Trent* new Articles of Faith, before the old Apostolical Creed, Never chuse the Popish Religion before the Protestant.

F I N I S.
